the responsibility of the State Governments. All the States/UTs have, therefore, been asked to take steps for effective implementation of the Manisana Wage Board Award. They have been specifically advised to form State-level Tripartite Committees/Implementation Cells for speedy and effective implementation of the recommendations of the Wage Boards. The Ministry has also set up a Monitoring Committee to oversee the progress of implementation and ensure the same by way of pursuing the matter with the States/UTs.

Workers engaged in plucking tendu leaves

2724. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of workers engaged in plucking tendu leaves for Andhra Pradesh based beedi factories as on date;

(b) how many of them are tribals; and

(c) what welfare measures Government have extended to them and what action Government propose to take to stop their exploitation by contractors and others?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) As per information received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh, 67,000 people are involved in collection of tendu leaves every year in Andhra Pradesh. About 30% of them are tribals. Collection of tendu leaves is done departmentally. A major social welfare scheme, 'Beedi Leaf Scheme' in Telengana area which is being implemented by the Government of Andhra Pradesh is aimed at ensuring employment to the rural landless poor and tribals during the lean agricultural season (summer months). About Rs. 36 crore are disbursed to tendu leaf collectors towards collection charges in this short span of 2 months of April & May. Besides the lives of these tendu leaf collectors are insured for six months (March to September) each year under Group Personal Accident Insurance Policy for Rs. 10,000/- each.